

**CHARLES RIVER WATERSHED STUDY**

**RECREATION INTERIM MEMO #3**

*Inventory of Recreation Resources  
Downstream of Moody Street*

**Prepared by**

**Department of the Army**

**New England Division, Corps of Engineers**

**424 Trapelo Road, Waltham, Mass.**

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RECREATION INTERIM MEMO NO. 3

Inventory of recreation resources, and evaluation of use, land and water areas of the Charles River downstream of Moody Street; and of the Muddy River.

1. The inventory includes the following basic resources:
  - (a) Public park lands on the Lower Charles.
  - (b) Major private recreation attractions located on the Lower Charles.
  - (c) Public park lands on the Muddy River.
  - (d) Recreational water, Lower Charles River.
  - (e) Recreational water, Muddy River.
2. The evaluation of uses of land and water recreation resources is based partly on records from agencies, and partly on estimates.
3. The water recreational inventory and use evaluation is a summary of the material contained in recreation Interim Memo. No. 2, "Recreational Boating Downstream of Moody St. Dam and Other Navigational Data" recently compiled.
4. Use at unrecorded recreation areas was estimated as follows:
  - (a) Head counts at Tot Lots and wading pools on seasonable summer days. Daily use was assumed to be 4 times the count at any given time. Seasonal use is based on fifty (50) days of ideal summer weather.
  - (b) Paths, grass areas, benches and shaded areas used for casual visitation were inspected on hot summer days and visitors counted. Casual visitation is a continuing, although intermittent, process. Daily use was assumed to be three (3) times the count at any given time, and seasonal use was based on fifty good days at peak use. However, three exceptions were made in the cases of areas adjacent to large educational institutions. These are: grass banks opposite Boston University; Memorial Drive Mall opposite Massachusetts Institute of Technology; grass banks off Memorial Drive

opposite Harvard College between Larz Anderson and Cambridge St. Bridges. These three areas are intensely used by University personnel, spring, summer and fall. Daily visitation was assumed to be ten times the count at any given time, and seasonal use was estimated on the basis of one hundred days under favorable weather conditions.

(c) Pedestrian overpasses into Charles River Embankment were selected for observation. Entries and departures were counted at each of these locations over a fifteen minute period. Hourly use was assumed to be four times the count; daily use at eight times the hourly rate; and seasonal use was based on fifty (50) days with ideal weather conditions.

(d) Observations under a, b, and c were conducted on good summer days, morning, noon, afternoon and evening on weekdays and weekends. Summer season includes period 1 June to Labor Day.

(e) MDC provided information on the following:

(1) Paid admissions at swimming pools and skating rinks.

(2) Recreational boat passages through Charles River Dam Locks.

(3) Use estimates for athletic fields and attendance estimates for the Hatch Shell concerts.

(f) Use estimates for the Fens, Riverway and Olmstead Park were furnished by the Boston Park Dept.

# INVENTORY OF METROPOLITAN COMMISSION PARK LAND AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

## CHARLES RIVER LOWER BASIN

NB: Peak Use indicates visits per hour, or per day, based on optimum weather conditions.

Estimated Seasonal or Annual Use is based on the number of visits or recreation occasions on fair day, with fifty good days assumed for the period 1 June to Labor Day.

Name and Location	Acreage	Facilities	Peak Use	Total Seasonal or Annual Use
A. Charles River Embankment from Charles River Dam to Harvard Bridge, Boston	54.10	Tennis Courts	60 per day	3,000
		Tot lot & wading pool	400 " "	20,000
		Joseph Lee Swimming Pool	1400 " "	32,322
		9.75 acre athletic fields-		
		2 softball & 1 soccer bleachers	600 " "	36,000 incl. spec.
		Charles St. Circle	240 per hr.	
		Pedestrian Bridge	1920 " day	96,000
		Paths, grass & benches	450 " "	22,500
		Tot lot	80 " "	4,000
		Hatch Shell Capacity		
		Concert	20,000 " concert	175,000
		Fiedler Pedestrian	208 " hr.	
		Bridge	1664 " day	89,000
		Clarendon St. Pedestrian	100 " hr.	
		Bridge	800 " day	40,000
		Fairfield St. Pedestrian	64 " hr.	
		Bridge	512 " day	25,000
		Paths, grass areas, benches	300 " "	<u>15,000</u>
TOTAL				557,822

# INVENTORY OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION PARK LAND AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

## CHARLES RIVER LOWER BASIN

Name and Location	Acreage	Facilities	Peak Use	Total Seasonal or Annual Use
B. Storrow Embankment from Harvard Bridge to BU Bridge, Boston. This area is adjacent to Boston University and reached by stairs from BU bridge and crossover Storrow Drive and by a pedestrian overpass at Sherborn St.	14.20	Sherborn St. Overpass Tot lots spray pool Grassy banks, paths, benches	180 per hr. 1440 " day 40 " " *1000 " "	72,000 2,000 <u>100,000</u>
TOTAL				174,000
*One hundred days peak use assumed.				
C. Soldiers Field Rd, Nonantum Rd., Boston. Acreage also includes Storrow Memorial Drive.	104.30	Banks near Harvard Business School Soldiers Field Rd. Picnic and grass area Playland & wading pool Nonantum Rd. wading pool (2) Nonantum Rd. swimming pool Ice skating rink (Nonantum Rd)	200 per day  400 " " 1100 " " 600 " " 1400 " "	10,000  20,000 55,000 30,000 51,326 <u>46,061</u>
TOTAL				212,37
D. Nonantum Rd., Newton-Boston line to Galen St.	17.0	Part of area occupied by Newton Yacht Club; part is approach to MDC Rink and New athletic fields. Remainder is mostly limited to a narrow unusable strip.	Unknown	
E. Area in Newton near Watertown Dam and Pedestrian Bridge over Charles River	5.0	No facilities. Many children use area. Est.	100 Per day	<u>5000</u>
TOTAL				5,000

# INVENTORY OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION PARK LANDS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

## CHARLES RIVER LOWER BASIN

Name and Location	Acreage	Facilities	Peak Use	Total Seasonal or Annual Use
F. River Street, Waltham		MDC swimming pool	1400 per day	51,951
		MDC wading pool	150 " "	7,500
		MDC skating rink		<u>8,219</u>
		TOTAL		67,670
G. Dealtry pools, Watertown		MDC wading pool	500 per day	25,000
		MDC swimming pool	1200 " "	<u>23,840</u>
		TOTAL		48,840
H. Charles W. Greenough Blvd. Galen st. to N. Beacon Bridge, including Island.	35.0	Walking, bicycle paths, childrens' playground, benches, grass banks	240 per day	<u>12,000</u>
			TOTAL	12,000
I. C.W. Greenough Blvd. from N. Beacon Bridge to Cambridge Boat Club including Hell's Half Acre, Watertown-Cambridge.	49.0	No use data available.		
J. Memorial Drive, Cambridge from Cambridge Boat Club to Magazine Beach, adjacent to Harvard Univ. and used intensively six months of the year. All in Cambridge.	37.6	Path, grass banks, benches and sycamore area to Larz Anderson Bridge Banks to Western Ave. Bridge. Weeks pedestrian bridge- Harvard Business School to Harvard College	*300 per day	30,000
			*3000 " "	300,000
			*1000 " "	<u>100,000</u>
			TOTAL	430,000

\*100 days assumed.

# INVENTORY OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION PARK LANDS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

## CHARLES RIVER LOWER BASIN

Name and Location	Acreage	Facilities	Peak Use	Total Seasonal or Annual Use
K. Magazine Beach, Cambridge	21.4	Swimming pool	1200 per day	31,532
		Tot lot & spray pool	100 " "	5,000
		Athletic fields: 2 baseball	500 " "	26,000
		Athletic fields: Spectators		<u>4,000</u>
			TOTAL	66,532
L. Memorial Drive, BU Bridge to Longfellow bridge	38.2	Mall used by MIT students	*100 " "	10,000
		Promenade, benches, shelters	<u>3200 " "</u>	<u>160,000</u>
			TOTAL	170,000
Totals all MDC areas	375.8		47346	1,744,251

\*100 days assumed.

## MAJOR PRIVATELY OWNED AND OPERATED AREAS AND FACILITIES ABUTTING LOWER BASIN

A. Harvard University area bounded by North Harvard Sta. and Soldiers Field Rd, and Harvard business School area.	67.0	Harvard Stadium	40,000 per day	200,000 spectators
		2/ Tennis courts (49) and other athletic fields use for three months spring, 2 months summer, and 3 months fall. 100 days full use assumed.	1,862 " "	<u>186,200</u>
2/ Tennis courts open to public on admission fee basis in summer.				TOTAL 386,200



MAJOR PRIVATELY OWNED AND OPERATED AREAS AND FACILITIES ABUTTING LOWER BASIN

Name of Area	Acreage	Facilities	Peak Use	Total Seasonal or Annual Use
B. Boston Museum of Science occupies MDC land under a lease as directed by the General Court	7.0	Attendance recorded from 7/1/66 - 6/30/67: Exhibits: Planetarium:	4,000 per day	276,000
				<u>250,000</u>
				526,000
TOTALS	74.0		45,862	912,200

OTHER PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS

City of Newton	6.1	Vacant Playground	No data	No data
Previous MDC Totals	375.8		47,346 per day	1,744,251
Totals of A and B	<u>74.0</u>		<u>45,862</u>	<u>912,200</u>
Grand Totals	455.9		93,208 " "	2,656,451

CITY OF BOSTON PARKS ON THE MUDDY RIVER

A. Back Bay Fens & Fenway	113.19	Athletic Stadium and field house Gardens, path, benches and grass areas	1,500 per day	58,000 300,000
B. The Riverway	28.22	Paths, benches & grass areas		10,000
C. Olmsted Park includes East Bank of Leverett Pond, Jamaica Pond and surrounding shores, and the Jamaica Way.	180.00	Band stand MDC skating rink Softball fields, paths benches, & grass areas.	1,200 per concert 1,500 per day	7,200 33,541 <u>300,000</u>

TOTAL 709,541

PUBLIC PARK LANDS, MUDDY RIVER

Name of Area	Acreage	Facilities	Peak Use	Total Seasonal or Annual Use
Town of Brookline: Riverdale	36.27	Facing Riverway, west bank		10,000
Town of Brookline: Brookline Field	8.6	High School Athletic Field 7,000 spectator capacity 6 capacity crowds assumed. 50 days football with 30 participants and 40 days baseball with 25 participants per day.	7,000	42,000
TOTALS: Muddy River Areas	<u>366.28</u>		<u>11,200</u>	<u>2,500</u> <u>54,500</u> 764,041
TOTALS: Charles River	<u>455.9</u>		<u>93,200</u>	<u>2,656,451</u>
∞ GRAND TOTALS: Charles & Muddy Rivers	822.18		104,408	3,420,492

SUMMARY OF RECREATION BOATING USE OF THE CHARLES RIVER  
LOWER WATERSHED

a. Charles River Basin from Galen St. Watertown to Charles River Dam, Boston.

<u>Type of Use</u>	<u>Number of Facilities</u> 1/ <u>Boathouses, Pavilions, docks or</u> <u>Yacht Clubs</u>			<u>Number of Boats</u>	<u>Number of Participants</u>	<u>Total Estimated</u> <u>Recreation Occasions</u>
Rowing	10			345	1,375	175,000 2/
Sailing		4		147	11,859	208,626 2/
Motor Boating			4	311	295	50,000 3/
	<u>10</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>803</u>	<u>13,529</u>	<u>433,626</u>

1/ Facilities used by 10 rowing clubs, 6 sailing clubs  
and four yacht clubs.

2/ Data from boating clubs.

3/ Based on boat passages through locks and inner basin cruises.

b. Jamaica Pond: Boston Park Department.

12 week sailing program. 2,000 participants. 16 sailboats, once a week  
per person, basis two persons per boat. 24,000 recreation occasions.

TOTALS: Charles River Lower Basin:	803	13,529	433,626
Jamaica Pond	<u>16</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>24,000</u>
	<u>819</u>	<u>15,529</u>	<u>457,626</u>

# RECAPITULATION OF BASIC RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

<u>a. River bank Park Lands.</u>		<u>Acreage</u>
(1)	Lower Charles River in Boston Under M.D.C.	375.8
(2)	Major Private Areas.	74.0
(3)	City of Newton, Lower Charles	6.1
(4)	Muddy River, City of Boston	321.41
(5)	Muddy River, Town of Brookline	44.87
	Total	<u>822.18</u>
<u>b. Recreational Water Resource.</u>		
(1)	8.4 mile long Lower Charles River Basin	700.0
(2)	Jamaica Pond	68.0
	Total	<u>768.0</u>
c.	Total acreage items (a) and (b).	1,590.18

## TOTAL ESTIMATED SEASONAL OR ANNUAL USES, ALL PARK LANDS AND WATER AREAS

a.	Lower Charles River Parks	1,744,251
b.	Harvard University and Museum of Science	912,200
c.	Muddy River Parks	764,041
d.	Lower Charles Water Area	433,626
e.	Jamaica Pond Water Area	<u>24,000</u>
 TOTAL		 3,878,118